

MERCATOR:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Saturday, April 3. to Tuesday, April 6. 1714.

The Exportation of our Wool to France the principal Assistance to the French to Rival us in our Manufactures.

The French have no Wool in France so good as ours.

What little Wool they have is not sufficient in Quantity to hurt us if they had not Wool from us.

A Challenge to the Opposers.

What those Men deserve of their Country who shall convey our Wool to the Enemy of our Manufactures.

WE have mention'd some of the Causes of the Improvement which the French have made in our Manufactures, the remaining Part is that of their having our Wool, which deserves to be spoken to effectually.

It is too true, the French have great Quantities of Wool from almost every part of Great Britain, and yet more from Ireland. The *MERCATOR* craves leave to speak a little of the Evil, and shall then speak of the Remedy.

Nothing is more sure, than that if the French had not our Wool the Improvement of their Manufactures would be so Trifling and Insignificant, as would very little affect us, and we should rather condemn than apprehend them.

What those People mean who affirm that the French have as good Wool as the English; and who applaud the French Manufactures, is easy to know; we see it too plain, that they mean to distract and amuse the poor People, and having procured a Hireling or two who have so little honesty as to say what their Employers dictate to them, without enquiring into the Truth, and have so much Ignorance as not to know when they Lye and when they speak True. By these Wicked and despicable Methods and Means they put what Falsities they please upon the World.

To examine the Truth of these Cases is the properest way to detect the Forgeries of a Party-hired Scribbler whose Renegado Employment has been to cry up the Excellency of the French Manufactures, publish that they have Wool sufficient, and work Cheaper than the English, and can undersel as Abroad, and many such Absurdities, which tho' horrible Lyes in themselves, yet tend to depreciate their own Country Manufactures,

discourage Merchants, lessen Trade, starve the Poor, and raise Disturbances in their Country.

This dirty and treacherous Work they are not ashamed of to carry on a Party, bribe the Dutch, and raise Mobs against the Administration.

Much good may the Hellish Principle do them that like it. The *MERCATOR* shall examine the Truth of the Case, and leave these Wretches to the Reproaches of their own Guilt.

That the French have some Wool is allow'd, but in the whole this is true, deny it who can.

1. The best Wool they have is not equal to ours, nor like it within any reasonable Degree of Comparison, or to speak in the Language of the Manufacturers. They have no Wool, which is either so fine in the Thread, or so long in the Staple, neither can the best of their Wool make a piece of Broad-Cloth so good for Substance and Fineness as the English Wool can: This the *MERCATOR* expresses so many Ways, that it may leave no room for Cavils and Quibbles, which are the Weapons the Opposers fight with.

If they will contradict, let them come to Evidence of Fact, the *MERCATOR* Challenges them to it, and is ready to put the Merits of the whole Case upon it; let them bring either a Proof of the Manufacture, or some creditable, honest, indifferent Person, who is not tainted with Parties, and has Judgment in either the Manufacture or the Wool.

And if they will produce either the Man or the Manufacture, and fairly prove one piece of Cloth made in France, all of French Wool, as good in Weight and Fineness, and as Cheap as a piece of the same kind of Cloth from Blackwell hall, all made of English Wool shall



shall be bought for at the Market-price; the *MERCATOR* hereby offers to give undeniable Security, to the Author that has so insolently affirm'd the contrary, to give him Ten Pounds a Yard for the piece of Cloth.

If this cannot be done, no Language can represent these Men in Characters black enough: Their Design, whatever their Persons are, is Vile and Treacherous, and a Man who can deal thus by his Country, ought not to breath the Air of that Country he so palpably seeks to ruin and destroy.

If the French had as good Wooll as the English, where has it been hid so many Ages? Why did they not let it be seen many Years ago? Why are they now but imitating us? Why have they not for many Years been not equally only, but superiour to us in Manufactures, and had all the Trade of the World from us? But of that by it self.

2. As they have not so good Wooll as we have in England and Ireland, so neither have they a Quantity, even of that poor Stuff they have, which is sufficient to supply the want of Wooll in such a Manufacture as that must be which pretends to serve such a Nation as France is, and Rival such a Trade abroad as Ours is; both which it is pretended they do, tho' both are false in the grossest manner imaginable.

It seems needless to spend any time to prove this Article, for the application the French make here to obtain our Wooll, the Risque they run for it, the Charge they are at in fetching it, and the Price they give for it, are such Testimonies of the Truth of it, as our Opposers, had they any Modesty, would blush when they think of Contradicting it.

Could this be rational if the French had as good Wooll as we, and enough of it to carry on their Manufacture! And if they have not, then all the Mischief the French are able to do us in the Woollen Manufacture, is owing to that one Original Evil, (viz.) The Exportation of our Wooll.

We see Remedies applying now to this Mischief by Parliament, tho' we have some reason to fear they may be ineffectual, especially such things being generally Calculated more for the Benefit of the Projector than for the real Execution. But Projecting of Methods is not the work of the *MERCATOR*. There is a way by which the Exportation of our Wooll might be effectually stopp'd, and not a Pack convey'd either out of Britain or Ireland, and which the *MERCATOR* is ready to offer in proper time and place, but that is not the present Case.

The present Case is to prove, that it is by the assistance of our Wooll only, that the French are render'd capable of making any Improvement in our Manufactures, and that without it they could do nothing worth our Concern, or prejudicial to our Commerce.

If this be so, then what shall we say of those People who are so divested of a Publick Spirit, as for their Private Gain to assist the French in that only thing in which they are supposed to be able to wound us so deep.

Above all, what shall we say that some of these very Complainers who cry out that the French Trade ruins our Manufactures; who wore Wooll in their Hats at the late Elections of Parliament, to signify that they were for choosing such Members as would take care of our Woollen Manufactures, yet some of those very Men are found to be guilty of carrying our Wooll over to France, and of Selling it to the French, that they might thereby Rival us in our own Trade; and if the *MERCATOR* is not mistaken, several of these are now in the Hands of Justice.

The *MERCATOR* thinks such Men deserve better to be Hanged with a Lock of Wooll in their Caps, than to be called Freeholders of a Country, whose Safety and Prosperity consists in keeping their Wooll at home, and which, if their Wooll is kept at home, are able to outdo all the World both in the Goodness, the Price, and the Quantity of their Woollen Manufacture, as was said before; and the *MERCATOR* thinks he cannot too often repeat it. The English Woollen Manufacture, take the Goodness with the Price, and the Price with the Goodness, is the best and the cheapest in the World, nor is any Nation able to Work cheaper than the English Manufacturers, setting the Value of their Work against the Price of their Wages.

We have nothing then to do to prevent the French Improving in their Manufactures, and Invading ours, but to keep our Wooll at home, and take effectual Care that the French are not supplied with it; and then to open a Door for our own Goods to go into France upon good Terms, that is, upon Low Duties, that so the Goodness of our Manufactures may, as it most certainly will, effectually discourage those of the French.

If any other Method can be proposed, the *MERCATOR* will be very glad to hear of it, especially if feasible and practicable, as he hopes these Methods are.

The next *MERCATOR* shall enquire a little how able the French are to Rival us in our Woollen Manufactures with the assistance of our Wooll, and how true it has been, which the Opposers have publish'd, of the French Underfelling us in Foreign Countries, and if it can be shewn that they have ever yet shut us out of one Market in the World by Vertue of their Manufactures or no; and if this should not appear, albeit they have so much of our Wooll, what would be the Case if the Exportation of our Wooll was effectually prevented.

